

This Memorial Day, he and his fellow veterans at the local American Legion hall will be marching in a parade somewhere in Texas. He's the best man I ever met. Virgil Poe: good man, good father, good soldier. That's plenty for one life.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 2145

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### REAFFIRMING SUPPORT OF THE HOUSE FOR LEBANON UNDER PRIME MINISTER FOUAD SINIORA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, as the representative of thousands of proud Lebanese Americans in Connecticut's Fifth Congressional District, I rise tonight in strong support of the democratically elected government of Lebanon and to condemn the recent violence perpetrated against the people of Lebanon by the terrorist group Hezbollah.

Lebanon is a vital ally in a region where we need all the allies that we can get. It is a vibrant society composed and defined by its diversity of religious and ethnic backgrounds. A culturally rich Nation renowned for its tolerance and democratic values, Lebanon stands at the crossroads of Arab tradition and Western culture.

Yes, Lebanon has struggled with the proxy wars fought inside its borders by powerful neighboring nations, but with the strong support of the United States, the strong independence and vibrant democratic tradition of Lebanon can and will continue.

Yesterday, this House considered H.R. 1149, which reaffirmed the support of this House for the democratically elected government of Lebanon, led by the governing March 14 coalition. This resolution was necessary because that government has recently come under vicious attack by Hezbollah-led opposition fighters, an outbreak of violence that has brought that country to the brink of civil war.

In response to legitimate actions by the government to protect the security of its own citizens, Hezbollah insti-

gated riots, blocked roads, forcibly shut down media stations, and attacked the residences of prominent members of the ruling coalition. During the course of this violence, Mr. Speaker, more than 69 Lebanese citizens were killed and more than 250 were wounded.

These actions blatantly violated the commitments made by Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who has always maintained that Hezbollah exists solely to defend Lebanon against Israel, and that its members would never take arms up against other Lebanese. That pretense is now clearly shown to the entire world to be false, as we have known it was for a very long time. Indeed, Hezbollah's primary purpose seems to be to act as the agent of Iran and Syria, which continue arming the terrorist group in order to maintain a presence in Lebanon and a military front on Israel's northern border.

This brief, but bloody, period of fighting was the worst violence Lebanon has seen since the civil war that engulfed that Nation from 1975 to 1990. It demonstrated the military strength of Hezbollah's militias, and it threatened the free media, religious tolerance, and cultural diversity that make Lebanon such an important ally of the United States. The streets of Beirut are now relatively calm, but Lebanon will remain under threat until that government becomes truly independent from foreign influence.

It has been more than 3 years since the Cedar Revolution, when the people of Lebanon took to the streets and demanded an end to Syria's occupation of that country. Unfortunately, while Syrian troops have withdrawn, its government has continued to undermine Lebanon's vibrant but fragile democracy. They do this by allowing weapons shipments to pass over their territory into Lebanon and by continuing to disrupt internal Lebanese politics.

The boiling over of tensions that have been building for months has brought the world's attention to the challenges facing Lebanon, and we must capitalize on that focus.

Last night, the government and opposition leaders concluded talks in Doha, Qatar, finally reaching an agreement that will allow for the formation of a government and the election of Michel Suleiman as President, probably as soon as this Sunday. This is a welcome development and one that bodes well for the future of Lebanon.

But a number of issues still remain unaddressed. These include the status of Hezbollah's weapons, the future of Lebanon's electoral law, and the long overdue investigation into the murder of former Prime Minister Hariri.

The Lebanese people have found a way to live side by side with all of their differences for years and years, and I for one believe that it is in the United States' best interest to do all that we can to use yesterday's political breakthrough to press for the total elimination of undue outside influence

on the Lebanese government and Lebanese society.

As political negotiations move forward in Lebanon, the United States, its Arab allies, and the European Union must provide the Lebanese government with the economic, military and political support it needs. We have seen the difficulty of promoting new democracies in the Middle East; however, in Lebanon, we have the opportunity to preserve one. A window of opportunity has opened, Mr. Speaker. The United States must now work diligently and quickly with Lebanon and her allies to assure that the moment is seized.

#### SUNSET MEMORIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is May 21, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Madam Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,903 days since the tragedy called Roe v. Wade was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them, Madam Speaker, died and screamed as they did so, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, no one could hear them.

And all of them had at least four things in common. First, they were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone, and each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it's time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government." The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution, it says, "No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core, self-evident truth.